



TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR LIFE

The New D.A.R.E. Study: 4th Year Update

Background

- The University of Akron's Institute for Health and Social Policy, with a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the enthusiastic support of D.A.R.E. America, is now in its fifth year of evaluating a new program with curricula for middle (7th grade) and high school (9th grade) students called *TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR LIFE*.
- With 19,000 students in six cities being closely monitored from grades 7 through 11, the study of *TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR LIFE* is one of the largest prevention research efforts in size, scope, and sophistication.

Results-to-Date

- The University of Akron researchers have found that the *TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR LIFE* program is reaching adolescents who are at elevated risk for substance use.
- The findings suggest that D.A.R.E. officers are equal to, and in some cases, better than teachers in delivering the *TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR LIFE* program as designed.
- Of the mediators in the *TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR LIFE* program, the program has had the strongest impact on normative beliefs.

Looking Ahead

- The researchers are concluding that *TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR LIFE* works as well as any other effective school-based prevention program.
- All prevention programs being equal, it could be that the D.A.R.E. officer delivery system is the positive variable that will make the critical difference between one effective prevention program and another.

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